

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, MOPS, TU

SUBJECT:SILVER FOX PUBLIC AFFAIRS GUIDANCE

FOR EMBASSY'S INFORMATION

1. DEFENSE DEPT. PLANS FOLLOWING NEWS RELEASE AND PRESS GUIDANCE AFTER COMMENCEMENT OF AUGUST 20-24 SILVER FOX OPERATION: BEGIN QUOTE: TWO U. S. NAVY SHIPS ARE CONDUCTING ROUTINE OPERATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS IN THE BLACK SEA. THEY ARE GUIDED MISSILE CRUISER USS JOSEPHUS DANIELS (CG-26) AND THE GUIDED MISSILE DESTROYER USS MITSCHER (DDG-35). THE OPERATION BEGAN AUGUST 20 AND WILL END AUGUST 24. THE JOSEPHUS DANIELS IS COMMANDED BY COMMANDER B. F. MCMAHON AND THE MITSCHER BY LIEUTENANT COMMANDER J. P. W. DECKER. EACH SHIP IS CLASSED AS A "LIGHT SURFACE VESSEL OF WAR" AS DEFINED IN THE MONTREUX CONVENTION, I.E., ITS DISPLACEMENT IS LESS THAN 10,000 TONS AND IT CARRIES NO GUN WITH A CALIBRE EXCEEDING EIGHT INCHES OR 203 MILLIMETERS. END QUOTE.

2. DEFENSE DEPT. RECOMMENDS FOLLOWING ANSWERS TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS: BEGIN QUOTE:

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Q. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS OPERATION?

A. OPERATIONS IN THE BLACK SEA ARE AMONG MANY REGULARLY

SCHEDULED

BY THE U. S. NAVY FOR TRAINING, MAINTAINING OPERATIONAL READINESS OF FLEET UNITS, AND PROVIDING PERSONNEL WITH EXPERIENCE IN OPERATING IN VARIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS.

Q. WHAT GUNS ARE ON THE SHIPS?

A. JOSEPHUS DANIELS HAS ONE FIVE-INCH AND TWO THREE-INCH GUNS, MITSCHER HAS TWO FIVE-INCH GUNS. ALL ARE WITHIN THE CONVENTION.

Q. DO THE SHIPS CARRY MISSILES?

A. THE DANIELS IS EQUIPPED WITH TERRIER AND THE MITSCHER IS EQUIPPED WITH TARTAR, BOTH DEFENSIVE SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILE SYSTEMS. BOTH SHIPS HAVE ASROC, A SHORT-RANGE UNDERWATER ANTI-SUBMARINE WEAPON. ASROC HAS NO CAPABILITY AGAINST LAND OR AIR TARGETS, DETAILS OF BOTH WEAPONS ARE AVAILABLE IN ANY STANDARD REFERENCE WORK.

. DO THE TERRIER, TARTAR AND ASROC SYSTEMS HAVE NUCLEAR CAPABILITY?

A. THE TERRIER, TARTAR AND ASROC SYSTEMS ARE CAPABLE OF EMPLOYING EITHER CONVENTIONAL OR NUCLEAR WARHEADS. SUCH CAPABILITY, HOWEVER, DOES NOT INDICATE ANY PRESENCE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. IT IS A LONGSTANDING POLICY TO NEITHER CONFIRM NOR DENY THE PRESENCE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS ABOARD U. S. NAVY VESSELS.

Q. WHY IS THERE A CRUISER IN THIS OPERATION? IS IT THE FIRST TIME A CRUISER HAS OPERATED IN THE BLACK SEA.

A. THE USN REDESIGNATED CERTAIN GUIDED MISSILE FRIGATE CLASSES (DLG) AS GUIDED MISSILE CRUISERS (CG) AS OF 1 JULY 1975. THE DANIELS HAS BEEN REDESIGNATED A CRUISER;
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HOWEVER, THERE HAVE BEEN NO PHYSICAL CHANGES TO HER.

Q. HAVE DANIELS AND MITSCHER OPERATED BEFORE IN THE BLACK SEA?

A. YES, IN MAY 1973.

Q. WHEN WAS THE LAST BLACK SEA OPERATION?

A. THE REDESIGNATED GUIDED MISSILE CRUISER USS WAINWRIGHT
OPERATED IN THE BLACK SEA IN LATE JUNE 1975. FOR YOUR
INFORMATION, THIS WAS ENROUTE TO AND FROM A PORT VISIT
AT CONSTANTA, ROMANIA, FROM 20-24 JUNE 1975. END QUOTE.
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